

Globalization at the Margins: Development and Inequality

RESRG Workshop #1
Lakehead University, Thunder Bay
March 10, 2016

ABSTRACTS

Session One (10:00-11:15): The Illiberal Consequences of Neoliberal Globalization

Neoliberalism and the Return of the Right in Hungary
Steven Jobbitt (Lakehead University)

Situating the resurgence of the Hungarian right in a global context, this paper explores the historical relationship between globalized neoliberal policies and conservative/illiberal cultural politics in Hungary. The paper argues that, though there are important links to earlier manifestations of right-wing politics, what we are witnessing in Hungary today (in particular with the FIDESZ and JOBBIK parties) is primarily a response to, and a consequence of, neoliberal policies and practices.

A Return to Authoritarianism? Contemporary Challenges to Democracy in a Comparative Context
Katalin Fabian (Lafayette College)

This paper examines recent authoritarian trends in Hungary, Russia, Turkey, and Israel in an effort to answer why some would see illiberalism as a “good fit.” Proponents of the concept of illiberal democracy select some basic liberties as vulnerable from the bundle of institutions and behaviors that contemporary liberal democracy came to represent. The analysis presented here highlights how illiberal trends have emerged in the Eurasian region and compares the distinct consequences of such developments in in both regional and the global contexts.

Session Two (3:00-4:15): Economic Development in Light of Labour Policies and Environmental Standards

The Globalization of Service Labour: Understanding the Rejection of Canada as a Preferred Source of Labour for the Global Business Service Industry
Jennifer Jarman (Lakehead University at Orillia)

When call centres first began their march north from the US, there was hope that they would contribute to the creation of a new economy in regions hard hit by the decline of older industries. As the centres arrived, concern was voiced that American companies were using telecommunications networks in ways that pitted regions against one another in the battle for jobs. Sociologists debated whether this was just another example of neoliberal economic expansion or

whether this industry had the potential to contribute to long-term development in regions faced with considerable out-migration. The paper continues this debate. It focuses on three factors: labour shifts associated with the dynamic of expansion and contraction of the US economy, the impact of exchange rates and the coming on stream of Asian competitors. In so doing, it makes a contribution to understanding debates about the nature of employment effects in this industry, as well as its implications for employment standards and regional development.

Globalization and Forest Certification: Empowerment or Cooptation of First Nations Engagement in Local Industrial Forestry?

Jean-François Fortier (Laval University)

Does aboriginal participation in international forest certification systems (IFCS) influence local forest governance, and how? Forest certifications, in tandem with independent audits, operate as “non-state market-driven governance systems,” in part to help consumers identify sustainable forest products. Certain IFCS, such as the International Forest Stewardship Council Standard (FSC), contain strong incentives for aboriginal involvement in forest management. For example, the FSC Standard requires forest managers to “identify and uphold indigenous peoples’ legal and customary rights of ownership, use and management of land, territories and resources.” I argue how the Cree Nation in the province of Quebec has been particularly empowered through the certification’s principle of “free, prior and informed consent.” I show how Cree mobilization through independent audit processes resulted in the revocation of a multinational’s certification. Finally, I examine how this First Nation successfully extended their “adapted forestry regime” to a parcel of their traditional lands.

Session Three (4:30-5:45): Globalization, State Violence, and Counter Movements

Oppressions in the Mundane: State Violence and Colonial Law in Northwestern Ontario

Richard Matthews (Lakehead University)

Extreme acts of violence and cruelty are an inevitable element of the modern global neoliberal state of affairs. Torture, prisons, ethnic cleansing, mass murder, the creation of refugees, bombings and other acts are common in the news, and essential to the imposition of modern markets on non-market societies. They are the condition of globalized capitalism. However, although these are spectacular, they are actually not where most neoliberal violence occurs. Focusing on them alone leaves us with a distorted sense of oppression in the modern neoliberal world. We fail to notice that most of the violence and oppression is unnoticed except by those it harms. It lies in the ordinary and proper functioning of laws, institutions, policies and individual behavior. Through a discussion of two cases – the undermining of hunting and trapping rights for first nations in northwestern Ontario and disputes over the seeding of wild rice in lakes adjacent to First Nations reserves, we will explore some of the impacts of globalization in Ontario.

Argentina and Hurricane Domingo: Neoliberalism and Its Contestations, 1984-present

Nicolas Lepine (Lakehead University)

This paper defines globalization as an international dynamic that enforces change from a protected national economy to an open speculative currency trading market. This process succeeds best where it encounters less resistance, usually in peripheral countries. During the Authoritarian Bureaucracy years (1976-1982) in Argentina, this systemic change was championed by Domingo Cavallo, a radical neoliberal economist. When time came to recast democracy, he “nationalized” the private

debt and started wondering how to possibly “*liberalize the peronist party, or peronize a liberal party.*” The first option succeeded in the 1990s when Carlos Menem took over the Peronist Party and privatized overnight the country’s assets. But the progressive sectors fought back. As soon as democracy came back in 1983, they resorted to broad political coalitions, a tactic that stemmed from the united front, popular front, and *Frente amplio* experiences. In the 1980s, the aim of the unity campaigns was the rejection of an illegitimate debt; in the 1990s, opposition to the neoliberalisation of the country; and in the 2000s, the creation of the *Frente para la victoria* that led to a break with international finance.